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538 of Shirin and Saipul Mueluek.[29] These are stories full of fantasy
177 and the supernatural in which the lyrical romanticism of Iran is clearly visible. Despite their strong demoniacal elements, they are definitely Mohammedan in content.

The Uighur fairy tales show some relics of what once must have been an epic tradition. It is a common characteristic of Inner Asian culture that the epic character of the folklore suffers with the settling of the once nomadic tribes and the subsequent influence of sedentary, non-Turkic cultures, particularly that of Islam with its taboos against the shamanastic traditions which were originally so important a part of these nomadic cultures.

773 A typical Uighur fairy tale with epic elements is that of Shim
538 Tömür *batyr*[30] (hero) and the fight of this hero with the seven-headed monster, Yälmüngüsh. The theme of this tale reminds us of the typical heroic epos as we find it still today among the nomadic Inner Asian Turks, with its stress on the strength and heroism of the individual *batyr* who can singlehandedly defeat a whole army and the most powerful monsters. The form also has strong elements of the epic tradition, in the constant repetition of key formulae (which serve as convenient pauses for the improviser before each episode), and in the typical slow action of the story. Here we have no longer an epic poem, but a prose tale. In all these epic fairy tales, however, we still have the remnants of a former poetic epos in the frequent versified soliloquies and key phrases which go through all the stories.

Many of the simple, nonepic legends and fairy tales appear to be borrowed, often from the Indian story cycles such as the *Bharatakadvatrimsika*. Such is the tale of the peasant[31] who is told by a passer-by that after his donkey has given certain signs, such as breaking wind, he will die. After the donkey breaks wind the peasant really believes he is dead. This tale has become part of a general Eastern story cycle and occurs in an almost identical version even in the Russian fairy tales.

[29] Radlov, *op. cit.*, VI, pp. 95–113, 131–144.

[30] *Ibid.*, 210 ff.; N. N. Pantusov, *Examples of Taranchi Popular Literature*, Kazan, 1909, pp. 1–13 (in Russian).

[31] Radlov, *op. cit.*, VI, 231 ff.

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between a group of young girls and a group of young men. They echo the old custom of bride purchase, marriage often against the will of the partners, the inheritance of the wife of the deceased by his successor in the family, and in general the totally subordinate position of the woman. The gay chorus of the young men asks the girl to hurry with the marriage. This is answered by the sad chorus of the girls, bewailing their loss of freedom.

Other traditional forms are the farewell song (*koshtasu*), the song of sad news (*estirtu*), and the mourning song (*zhoktau*). The farewell song has many variations, as have the other traditional songs. It might be composed by a dying father or mother, telling the family of last wishes, speaking of the heaviness of parting from life and of unfulfilled dreams. Another favorite type of farewell song is the farewell to the family and the native land. In the period of forced migrations due to outside aggression, these songs were particularly widespread. Thus for instance there is preserved today a farewell song, composed by the famous eighteenth century *akyn* (bard) Bukhar Zhirau on the occasion of the forced migration of a group of the Kazakhs from their traditional grazing grounds as a result of pressure from the Jungars:

A caravan is marching from the heights of the Kara Tau . . .
How hard it is to bid good-by to our native land!
Tears stream from dark eyes . . .
What times must we live in! Oh, times of misery!
The tears from my eyes form seas and lakes.
What times of hardship!
Happiness and richness have forsaken us.
Dust rises from the wandering caravan —
Worse than the icy storms of December.[42]

As among other nomads, tales and legends play a great role among the Kazakhs. While Kazakh tales show the strong influence of neighboring cultures, and particularly of the *Arabian Nights*, there are also many original tales of magic, animal tales — which

[42] Abdykalykov, Pankratova, *op. cit.*, pp. 170–171.

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are particularly popular because of the close association of the Kazakh cattle breeders with animals — and tales dealing with the struggle for good pasture land. Thus, for example, the tale of *Zhupar*[43] tells of the mother of a great family who leads her children away from the rest of the clan, which has become poor because of cattle starvation.

The heroic epos is of particular importance among the nomads. It is usually connected with actual historical events such as the falling apart of the Kazakh Khanate (*Shora Narokov*), the fight against the Kalmuks (*Er Targyn*), the struggle with the Uzbeks (*Kambara*). The authors of these epics are generally unknown and the epos is spread by the traveling epic bards, *zhyrshi* (from *zhyr*, song, which is the only term the Kazakhs have for the epos). The meter of the epos is usually a seven- or eight-footed verse, with a varying number of lines to a stanza. There is no steady rhythm in the verse. The musical quality is achieved by instrumentation and is built on tonal repetition and alliteration. The more dramatic parts of the epos are rendered in a fast and declamatory meter (*zheldirme* — the trotting race).[44] The origin of most of the epics appears to be very early. The fact that the term "Kazakh" rarely occurs, and that the heroes are called "emigrants from Nogaila" leads to the conclusion that at the time of the origin of most of the epics the Kazakhs were still part of the Golden Horde.

A typical heroic epos is that of *Er Targyn*,[45] which proclaims the virtues and prowess of the typical epic hero, who by his strength, alertness, and sometimes almost supernatural powers, is able to defeat singlehanded the greatest armies and the most powerful supernatural beings and to extricate himself from the most awkward situations. In this particular epos, the hero, a fugitive from his own Khan, finds refuge in the land of the Crimean Khan and by his great power helps him defeat the Kalmuks. For this he is promised the Khan's daughter, whom he wins only

[43] *Op. cit.*, pp. 140–141.
[44] L. S. Sobolev, *Pesni stepei*, Moscow, 1940, pp. 12–13.
[45] Radlov, *op. cit.*, III, pp. 153–205.

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after a prolonged struggle with the Khan, who doubts his social status. Side by side with herioc elements the epos contains long and effective lyrical passages, dealing with the love between Er Targyn and the Khan's daughter, Ak Zhunus.

Quite different from the heroic epos are the lyrical tales, which are concerned mainly with romantic subjects of love and suffering. The most popular of these is the Romeo and Juliet-like tale of *Kozy Korpesh and Bayan Slu* which is found in Uighur folklore under the name of *Täji Pasha and Sora Khanim*,[46] and among the Oirats under the name of *Kioziuik*. This is the tale of two lovers who had been promised to each other by their respective fathers before their birth. Because of the death of Kozy Korpesh's father, however, Bayan Slu's father breaks the contract, not wishing to marry his daughter to an orphan. The two lovers are unable to find their happiness together in life. It is only after their death that they can find peace from persecution and on the two adjoining graves arise two bushes which grow together, like the roses that sprang from the graves of Barbara Allen and her lover.

In the nineteenth century, when the Kazakhs were fighting for their independence in a series of risings against the Russians, their songs became the main propaganda weapon for the rallying of national sentiment. Many of the foremost bards also became political leaders, and we have from this period a whole series of songs about the various phases of the struggle for independence.

Contact with the Russians and particularly with the Russian exiles who were sent into the Kazakh steppes made for a great cultural development, despite the Russian policy of denationalization and Russification. This period witnessed an impressive growth of written literature, not only concerned with Kazakh themes, but also containing new themes reflecting the influence of Russian literature and, through it, of Western literature in general. After the establishment of the Soviets and their program of cultural development for the national minorities, the Kazakhs on the Soviet side of the border developed a flourishing young litera-

[46] Radlov, *op. cit.*, VI, pp. 236 ff.; A. S. Orlov, *The Kazakh Heroic Epos*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1945, p. 5 (in Russian).

562 There is, on the whole, a stirring, Wild West attractiveness about her
177 appearance, this Kalmuck Mongol, even as she goes about the tasks of preparing cheese, chopping wood, or milking.

Nor is she necessarily an ignorant woman. A Mongol princess of Tihwa, for example, has studied English in Pei-p'ing, French and medicine at Brussels, and in addition speaks Russian as well as her native tongue. The problem of so-called Oriental conservatism, according to this woman's views, may have originated in a desire to be undisturbed. But she, and other Mongol intelligentsia, are alert and modest enough to admit that out of the creativeness of the Occident new light is being shed on how man might best live; from the history of such as she and her ancestors, the Occident has in its turn much to learn.

The Kirgiz

563 Another of the fascinating ethnic groups that roam the Sinkiang
773 mountains and steppes are the Kirgiz. They are the people whom a legendary white Prester John is said to have ruled in the Middle Ages, and they are supposed to have introduced the Christianity of Nestorius to Asia. The Kirgiz are related to the old Uighurs also, it seems, and were powerful in the Altai region in the centuries just preceding the Mongol invasion. They, like the Mongols, are horsemen; but their homeland is in the steep crags, the narrow mountain trails and not so much in the steppes. Those who now live in the Pamirs fringing Southwest Sinkiang have their own legends of origin. It seems that there were once *kirk kiz*, "forty maidens," who became pregnant and so gave birth to the Kirgiz people. One version of the story is that they had intercourse with a red dog; another, that they dipped their fingers in a magic stream; a third, that the foam of Lake Issyk Kul served as the needed sperm.

795 Moslems of the Sunni order, the Kirgiz vest their tribal government
622 in the hands of elders whose dicta are strictly respected. These elders adjudicate a multitude of questions such as those of petty thievery, pas-
795 toral boundaries, and property settlements. No foreigner is supposed to witness a Kirgiz court, which often meets in an ante-room of an *ak-ui* or *kirga*—the native tent dwelling. Adjournment of the court is sig-

3: Skrine G-3 (1922-1924) 1926 All Sinkiang All

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The snakes found in the Kashgar oasis are not poisonous, but the people have a certain superstitious dread of them for which it is difficult to account. It is said that if you kill a snake, its mate will follow you about everywhere—haunt you, in fact, like an Indian "sending." As in most Oriental countries, rumours of human sacrifice obtain currency whenever any great building work is commenced. When Major Dockray erected the masts of his wireless station, five miles north of Kashgar, the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages spread it abroad that he had kidnapped forty Turki children and had buried them underneath the masts. He supposed that it was the "Hidden Hand" trying to wreck the scheme, but it was not; it was a very ancient and deeply-rooted superstition. At Kashgar it is believed that the great mud wall of the city contains the bodies of the slaves who died under the overseers' whips while engaged in building it; as they fell, it is said, their bodies were built into the wall. This is obviously a variant of the human sacrifice legend, and probably represents a race-memory of horrors that used to take place in forgotten ages.[1]

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Since the earliest times the Takla Makan Desert has been the subject of much superstition and legendary lore. The people who live on its verge all believe that great and wealthy cities lie buried beneath its sands, and that it is haunted by demons and the ghosts of the cities' former inhabitants. These are much feared by the "Taklamakanchis" or treasure-seekers who year after year risk and sometimes lose their lives in desert expeditions in search of buried treasure. A remarkable example of the antiquity of the Takla Makan legends is given by Sir A. Stein in *Sand-buried Ruins of Khotan*."[2] While on his way to the Uzun-Tati site north of Domoko on the Khotan-Keriya road, he heard from some villagers a legend of the Sodom and Gomorrah type about the city which had once existed at Uzun Tati. Its inhabitants, they said, mocked at a holy man who had rebuked them for their sins, whereupon as a punishment God had rained sand upon the

[1] When the Grandpass Victoria Bridge was commenced at Colombo, it was firmly believed that two children had been sacrificed to the god of the Kelani River. As recently as the summer of 1924 serious riots, in which six Sikh taxi-drivers were killed, took place at Calcutta as the result of a rumour that certain Sikh workmen engaged in the construction of a dock were kidnapping and sacrificing Muhammadan children.

[2] Pp. 430, 438–9.

3: Skrine G-3 (1922-1924) 1926 All Sinkiang All

773 place for seven days and nights until all was buried. Now the great Buddhist pilgrim Hsuan-tsang who passed this way in the seventh century of our era stayed at a town called Pi-mo, which Stein has conclusively identified with the Uzun-Tati site; and at this place Hsuan-tsang heard an almost exactly parallel Sodom and Gomorrah legend about another buried city called Ho-lo-lo-kia, still further out in the Takla Makan! A similar story is attached to the shrine of Imam Jamal-ud-Din at Keriya; this saint is supposed to have caused the sudden overwhelming of the city of Ketek because of insults he had received from its inhabitants. While at Goma in 1922 I had occasion to interrogate some Taklamakanchis from Qaratagh Aghzi, the "terminal oasis" of the Kilian River, about a new desert site which they said they had found a couple of years previously. At first they were uncommunicative, but afterwards when their tongues were loosened they told me about their discoveries, and many other things as well. One of them described an experience he had had in the neighbourhood. "I was lost one evening in the Takla Makan," he said, "and had no water. Suddenly I saw before me great walls in the sand and a gateway in the midst of them. I passed through the gateway and found myself in the outer court of a huge *yamen*.[1] I went through more doors and courtyards and at last I entered a great hall (*aivān*) which was full of treasure, gold and coral and pearls. But there was a huge tiger on guard there; flames issued from his mouth and I knew he was an evil spirit. I fainted from fear, and when I came to my senses I was among the sands and there was no *yamen*. Next day I came upon the tracks of wood-cutters and found my way home."

172 Sir A. Stein's researches have proved that none of the buried cities of the Takla Makan which have so far been found were overwhelmed by any sudden catastrophe. All were abandoned bit by bit, owing either to a generally-diminishing water-supply, or to the shifting of particular rivers, or to political causes. The Sodom and Gomorrah legends are probably, therefore, quite baseless. But this does not necessarily imply that the ancient tradition about the "Forty Cities of the Takla Makan"—great and populous centres, now buried under the sands far out beyond the furthest explorations of the archæologists—has no foundation in fact. The dawn of history in the Tarim Basin is relatively late, the second

[1] Any palace or large Chinese house is called a "yamen."